

You said that you did not get remission for failure of crops. Wherever there is a case for remission it can be claimed under the rules. I remember that, during the south-west monsoon this year when there was shortage of rains, I asked the Peishkars of both the Trivandrum and Padmanabhapuram Divisions to direct the Tahsildars to make a field-to-field inspection before the crop was removed, and that, I believe, has been done. But in the Kodayar area there was no necessity to do so because the crop was saved by timely rains. Individual cases of remission should certainly be considered, and the Peishkars have the power to grant such remissions under the remission rules. In cases in which remissions are not granted, the matter may be taken on appeal to the Land Revenue Commissioner and the Government. In your taluk, remission is granted as a matter of course under the rules. In Central and North Travancore remission is granted only as a special favour on occasions of widespread calamity.

Member.—I would request you to see the Vannampara site.

Dewan.—I have seen the Vannampara anicut site and the remains of the old anicut. I am a lay man and I can say nothing about it. It is a matter for professional investigation. It is the work of experts to take levels and prepare estimates.

59. Irrigation in Travancore with special reference to the Vilavankod Taluk.

Mr. R. Narayana Pillai (Member, Vilavankod Taluk) stated at the outset that the country produced only two-thirds of the rice in actual demand, while for the remaining one-third it depended on foreign countries. Though major irrigation in the Southern Division depended on the Kodayar, he said that minor irrigation was not receiving adequate attention at the hands of Government as of old and that, as the Government revenue increased, the amount spent on minor irrigation, instead of proportionately increasing, steadily decreased. In support of this he quoted the figures of expenditure on minor irrigation works from 1082 to 1096. The Member expressed the gratitude of the people of his taluk for the grant of an English High School and for the orders issued in regard to the restoration of minor irrigation works. 98 per cent of the people of the taluk were agriculturists and the area under minor irrigation in the taluk was 6,207 acres. The Member said that (1) the amount of Rs. 30,000 sanctioned in 1097 for the restoration of minor irrigation tanks in the Neyattinkara and Vilavankod taluks was inadequate as far as his taluk was concerned, (2) that it was beyond their capacity to pay interest at the rate of $6\frac{1}{4}$ per cent on the amount equivalent to 50 per cent of the cost of restoration to be advanced by Government, (3) that the water cess of Re. 1 per acre for the maintenance of the works after restoration was too much for the people to bear and (4) that the Dewan Peishkar's present proposal in regard to the improvement of 10 minor irrigation tanks in the taluks was unsatisfactory.

The Member then requested that the work of restoring those tanks might be arranged to be carried out one after another by the prominent ryots holding lands in that area. He then urged the desirability of constructing an anicut at Vannampara or at least at the end of the Pamburi rock which, he said, would be very useful. In conclusion, he prayed that an investigation might be conducted by an expert officer and a non-official committee and orders issued on the basis of the decision of the majority.

Dewan's reply.—I am entirely in agreement with you in saying that minor irrigation demands greater attention from Government than it has had in the immediate past. You are well aware that, in regard to Vilavankod and Neyattinkara taluks, I have taken up this matter and held a conference, and you have also admitted that the reason for the delay in the execution of some works at least in these two taluks is the non-settlement of the terms relating to contribution, etc., by the ryots. I might have said that I would be prepared to spend about Rs. 70,000 for this part of the country, if arrangements could be made for the proper execution of the works. In Neyattinkara Government are prepared to spend more than

Rs. 30,000 on minor irrigation works, provided that proper arrangements could be made and facilities afforded to Government to utilise the allotment fully. Government cannot therefore be blamed for not beginning to spend this year's allotment, viz., Rs. 30,000. I would very much like to spend the money before the end of the year, provided you would enable the Government to do so. I think your remarks in regard to these terms are based upon one or two misapprehensions. You seem to think that Government want to get interest on the expenditure they make. The intention of Government is to spend Rs. 30,000 and they expect the ryots to make a contribution and Government are willing to advance the latter sum as a loan so as to avoid delay in the execution of the works. The Government are also willing to get back the advance money in instalments. It is on this advance that Government propose to charge interest. It is an advance similar in character to advances under the Agricultural Loans Regulation. No interest will be charged on the portion which the State proposes to contribute as its share towards the restoration of these tanks. I hope I have made myself quite clear. I do not think it unreasonable on the part of Government to expect interest on the amount which they advance and which they can realise only in the course of ten years.

You next spoke of a water cess. It is not a water cess. It is the charge for maintenance. Water cess is the payment for the water which we give. Here it is a case which I propose to take from the ryots for absolving them from the duty of maintaining these minor irrigation works. Section 13 of the Irrigation Regulation says that "when any minor irrigation work has been constructed or completely restored or repaired at the cost, wholly or partly, of Government, it shall be the duty of the proprietors of the lands benefited by such work to maintain it, that is, to keep it at the level of efficiency at which it was when the construction, restoration or repair was completed". What I said was that it might not be easy for the ryots to combine to keep the work in that level of efficiency always. That is why all these works have deteriorated. I do not for a moment deny the indifference of the Government. But the ryots have also been indifferent and they have not combined. I have therefore made the proposal that, if you pay so much per acre, it will be the duty of Government to keep all these works in a state of efficiency and I distinctly remember having also said so to the gentlemen that attended the conference at Kuzhithura. If you can form an Irrigation Board, you can take back the money and attend to the efficient maintenance of the works yourselves. I shall be glad if you can conduct such repairs and maintenance yourselves. The arrangement detailed above is purely of a contractual nature and the provisions of the Irrigation Regulation will be examined with a view to see in what respects they stand in need of amendment so as to make this proposal workable. Then there is another point that I have to advert to. You have been quoting figures of expenditure on minor Irrigation works. The figure for 1936 is Rs. 18,000. This is, no doubt, very disappointing. But I must tell the House that we should have spent more, at least Rs. 30,000 or Rs. 40,000, had I not taken steps to suspend the expenditure in the Shencottah taluk, where I found that these works were being carried out in pursuance of an aimless and haphazard programme. I would assure you that minor irrigation has my entire sympathy, and I shall try to spend as much as possible on that account.

60. Opening of a road from Kuzhivila to Tutturtura in South Travancore.

Mr. K. Hussian Pillai (Member, Nominated) spoke about the necessity for opening a cart road from Kuzhivila near Kaliakkavila in Ezhudesapattu *pakuthi*, Vilavankod taluk, to Tutturtura via Nambukali and said that the petitions presented by the villagers during the past 40 years bore no fruit. He observed that the road would, if constructed, be of great use to the people of Kuzhivila, Pudukkada, Koravankode, Kirattur, Vaikattur, Puttura, Elavantura, Tutturtura and several other places. The absence of the road was very keenly felt by the people, especially in the rainy season, when they found it difficult to transport even bare necessities to their houses. Further, there were numerous temples, mosques, churches and schools in the locality which would be benefited by the proposed road. According to the Member the revenue from the locality